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**15th Annual Historical Cemetery Tour**  
**October 30, 2010**  
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 First Presentation 9:00 a.m.

### Sunset Shoreline Vigil Recalls LGBT Teen Suicides

Court ruling allowing "don't ask, don't tell" to continue during appeal brings shock, anger

by Joe Mello  
**LBReport.com**  
Community Correspondent



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(Oct. 20, 2010) -- Roughly 150 people from various walks of life took part in a Sunset Vigil tonight (Oct. 20) at LB's Granada Beach Boat Landing to honor and remember LGBT teens recently lost to suicide.



Photo credit: Joe Mello

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The gathering included Assemblymember Bonnie Lowenthal, LB Councilman Robert Garcia, Signal Hill Vice Mayor Larry Forester and LB First Lady Nancy Foster.



Assemblywoman Lowenthal, Councilman Garcia, SH Vice Mayor Forester. Photo credit: Joe Mello

"The saddest thing for me is that any child would take their life. So we all have to be strong and have to believe it will get better," Ms. Foster told the crowd.

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First Lady Nancy Foster. Photo credit: Joe Mello

Multiple L.A. media outlets were present (in background, newsvan from L.A. TV station)



Left to right: Signal Hill Vice Mayor Forester; Tim Patton (Deputy District Dir. for Assemblywoman Lowenthal), Assemblywoman Bonnie Lowenthal. Photo credit: Joe Mello

The event was organized by The Center of Long Beach, the LB Lambda Democratic Club and Councilman Garcia's Office.

The threat of rain gave way to a beautiful fall evening as a small group of Long Beach musicians that included Michelle Manigone, Christina Rosie, and Reba Birmingham performed for the crowd.

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Photo credit: Joe Mello

Speakers included The Center Director Ron Sylvester, Rev. Jane Galloway, Danielle Nava from GLSEN, King Chang from the Trevor Project, Councilman Garcia and Ms. Foster.



Rev Jane Galloway and Ron Sylvester. Photo credit: Joe Mello

The event is "a call for change, tolerance and acceptance for all," Mr. Sylvester said.



The Center's Ron Sylvester addresses the crowd. Photo credit: Joe Mello

When speeches concluded, participants went to the water and against a setting sun tossed white flowers in the water in memory of teens who committed suicide following bullying and taunting.



Photo credit: Joe Mello

The evening's somber tone gave way to shock and anger as news spread of a ruling by the U.S. 9th District Court of Appeals that lets the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy continue while the Obama administration appeals a federal district court ruling that struck down the DADT policy.

Signal Hill Vice Mayor Forrester told **LBReport.com**: "I'm pissed! What is it about a person serving their country that is LGBT that is negative? I know some high ranking gay military officers and it's just about doing their job."

Assemblywoman Lowenthal, who was very emotional throughout the Vigil, said she hadn't yet heard of the late breaking court ruling, and on learning of it told **LBReport.com** that it shocked her. "It doesn't seem possible. I thought we had finally

eliminated all vestiges of discrimination," she said.

LB First Lady Nancy Forster also expressed shock at the news, telling *LBReport.com*: "Being able to be openly gay and not have to hide who they are should be part of serving your country with pride."

The Center Director Roy Sylvester, who had been busy organizing the event, also had yet to hear about the Appeals Court action. He told *LBReport.com*: "I'm disappointed. It is all intertwined. The more you allow gay people to be who they are openly, in the service, marrying, then less likely bullies are going to seek out to ridicule people like these poor kids."

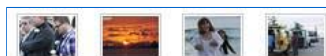


Photo credit: Joe Mello



Photo credit: Joe Mello

Justin Rudd also has a photo gallery of the event on



Facebook.

To view it, [click here](#).

5 people recommend this.

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